

## The Clipper Visits...Lorraine Frisbee

By MARTHA HIMES

Little plastic computers. Soccer balls. Winnie the Pooh, Elmo, Barbie and Harry Potter. Spongebob Squarepants.

A litany of a busy modern life's interests? Well, maybe, but also a list of cake toppers and molds available at Lorraine's Cake and Candy Supplies.

Duxbury native Lorraine Frisbee and her husband, Jim, started Lorraine's Cake and Candy Supplies as a hobby in 1977. Twenty-six years later, it's a busy store, an Internet merchant, the exclusive United States purveyor for a line of Australian cake pans, a cake decorating school, and Frisbee's primary activity.

Frisbee, 55, baked her first wedding cake when she was thirteen, inspired by a neighbor who had taken an adult education cake decorating course. The helpful neighbor lent the neophyte baker a cake-decorating book and a recipe for a huge cake requiring three pounds of sugar. Armed with this recipe, Frisbee baked and decorated a cake for her brother's wedding shower. That cake was such a success she was tapped to bake his wedding cake as well.



"I didn't want to give up that if this didn't go," Frisbee said. But she had a full plate: in addition to teaching and running the store, Frisbee had two young children at home at the time. And since business was initially slow, Frisbee baked cakes for sale as well to help make ends meet.

After about three years, the business was doing so well that Frisbee needed a larger kitchen, more space for classes and a separate store for her bakery. She left teaching and embraced cakes full time. She bought an adjacent building in Hanover Four Corners for the business, and rented a space nearby for her classes.

the customers. She also enjoys teaching classes. Her classes are always full of excited students and she gets a charge out of "helping people have that same gung ho attitude I had, like they really want to do it all," she said.

Her cake decorating classes attract both beginners and professionals interested in learning foreign methods that the culinary schools don't teach, such as fondant or gumpaste flowers. Frisbee has produced eight videos on cake decorating which are available at her store or on her website, [www.lorrainescakesupply.com](http://www.lorrainescakesupply.com).

After a successful career

"I picked out a cake and said, 'I love this cake, I'm going to do it,'" she remembered.

Her mother encouraged the hobby by ordering professional cake pans for Frisbee from Minneapolis. She obtained a syringe for frosting design from Toabe's Hardware in Kingston Center.

About seventeen years later, Frisbee was a first grade teacher in the Pembroke elementary school system, still baking cakes on the side for teachers and family. "I really liked it, it was a relaxation-type thing," she said. She and Jim were thinking of starting a business, and "as a lark," Frisbee said, they decided to start a cake decorating supply store.

At the time, it was difficult to get cake supplies on the South Shore. There were no crafts stores and the closest cake and candy supplier was in Boston. Frisbee rented the end spot of a building in Hanover Four Corners (where their store is still located) and bought display cases and store equipment from a store in Quincy that was going out of business.

While she made their first sale the day they opened, the business was slow to pick up at first. Frisbee hired her mother-in-law to work in the store for her while she continued to teach first grade.

Eventually, she was able to purchase a store for her bakery as well.

Frisbee no longer bakes cakes for retail. She recently sold her bakery to a former cake decorating student of hers, Fernando Gonzales, who now runs a bakery called Nando's in the space.

"I was doing so many cakes—I did the cakes for a couple of caterers and Pembroke Country Club and Halifax Country Club. I did quite well, but it was just taking a toll in time. I was working 18, 20 hours a day. It was too much," she said.

Also, since most festive occasions take place on the weekend, Frisbee never had weekends off. "As many brides as I talked to, none of them wanted to change their wedding from a Saturday to a Tuesday," she joked.

Frisbee's customers are primarily amateur cake bakers. Thanks to the Internet, they come from all over, as far north as Maine, as far west as Colorado, and as far south as Miami.

At any given time, there are approximately 8,000 items in stock in the store. Some are seasonal, rotating with the holidays. Her most difficult task, Frisbee said, is keeping an eye on the inventory and making sure she doesn't run out of supplies.

Her favorite task is helping

entering cake decorating competitions, she is now a cake decorating judge.

Lorraine's, Inc. is still a family affair. Her husband Jim teaches the candy-making classes, and their daughter Laurie Bourke works in the store. Laurie and the Frisbees' son Jim Jr. live with their respective spouses in Pembroke. They each have two children.

Jim and Lorraine Frisbee still live in Duxbury. In their spare time, they collect Department 56 porcelain houses. Their collection has grown to over 300 houses, and is the focus of an annual holiday bus tour. They are also looking forward to Jim's retirement in a few years, when they hope to do some traveling.

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